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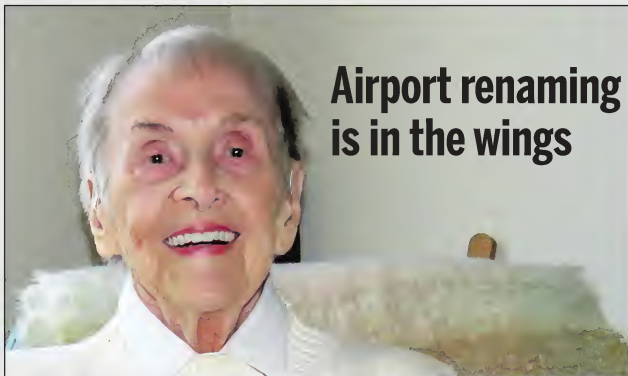
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■ AVIATION

The Flying Housewife

GREG FUMMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

She never, ever wanted to set foot inside an airplane — but today, Dorothy Rungeling is perhaps the most celebrated woman in Canadian aviation.

She was the first Canadian woman to hold an airline transportation licence, the first to solo in a helicopter, she earned numerous air race trophies and was awarded the Amelia Earhart Medal.

She has called Canada's Flying Housewife.

But to many people Rungeling, who turns 104 in May, is simply Pelham's sweetheart who has lived a storied life, not only as a pioneer for female aviators but as an entrepreneur, a musician, author and painter.

The next chapter in her life could see the small south, Pelham airport where it all started named Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport.

"It was nothing but surprises," she says of hearing the suggestion recently.

"I never occurred to me that that would happen."

Rungeling, the adopted daughter of a Pelham farmer, met her husband Ethelwyn Wetherald, started flying in 1948. After numerous \$10 lessons, she got her licence on Aug. 10, 1949.

"Why did I want to fly? I didn't. I was scared to death of it," she says wryly.

She recalls one day she went to then-named Welland-Port Colborne Airport along the Welland River in Pelham. Her husband Charles and her five-year-old son went for a slight-seeming flight.

"I thought I'd never see them again when they left the ground. I was just praying all the time that they'd get back again."

Back safely on solid ground, she recalls "Barry looked at me and said, 'OK, Mommy, it's your turn now.' What do you

do in a case like that?" she asks with a chuckle.

"So I went, and was completely captivated."

Instead of the view, she was more interested in the plane's instrument panel, curious about all the gauges and wanting to know more about their relevance to flight.

"So I had to go again, and that started it right."

Born in 1911, in her younger days she trained horses, shot skeet and rode a motorcycle — another rarity among women in those days. Was she a young rebel?

"You'd almost think so," she says with a grin.

While playing clarinet in the Ridgewile Band — she also played saxophone, violin and harmonica — Charles came along one night and asked her to dance.

It was the 1930s, and the start of a lifelong love affair with a man who encouraged her to fly.

It wasn't until 1943 that they wed. As a couple they started a used car business that evolved into a Welland garage called County Motors, a business for British cars such as MGs and Packards.

The same year Rungeling obtained her private pilot's licence, her husband bought her a two-seater Luscombe Silhouette B4 plane. She traded it the next year for a four-seat Piper PA-26.

By 1950, she had made her first long-distance flight, to Cuba and back.

Around that time Rungeling, by then a member of the Ninety-Nines — a sorority of sorts for pilots that was initiated by Amelia Earhart in 1929, its name heliported to derive from the number of women who first joined the group — began competing in air races.

"It was another Charlie thing. Charlie figures him (in my flying)."

Rungeling had seen an ad about an air race that piqued her interest.

"Charlie said, 'Why don't you go in it.' That was the start."

She was often the only female among a pack of 20 to 30 men who would race coast to coast in speed-handicapped planes, usually covering distances of 4,000 kilometres.

She completed three times in the All-Woman Transcontinental Air Race — nicknamed the Powder Puff Derby — across the U.S. At one time, she and her co-pilots wore matching aprons that read: "To hell with housework."

She's not sure what people thought when they heard of her and her airborne exploits. "Probably they thought I was a little off," she quips.

Rungeling also competed in short-distance precision flying competitions, winning the Governor General's Cup at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1953 and 1955.

She loved the thrill of races. "They were just a lot of fun," she says. "I guess it's just like any other sport — hockey, baseball — people get involved and just stay there."

During her competitive years, Rungeling managed many significant milestones. She earned her commercial pilot's licence in 1951, instructor's certification in 1953, her senior commercial pilot's licence in 1954 and in 1959 her airline transport licence — the first Canadian woman to do so.

(Her driver's licence is good until this summer, but she has recently stopped getting behind the wheel.)

It was also in 1958 that she became the first woman to pilot a helicopter solo.

"I didn't get a licence, I could have. Bell helicopter company said if I would come to Texas they would put me through free, all the flying

free for my ticket, but it would mean I would've had to spend a month down there and I just couldn't see leaving family and friends, so I didn't go. So I didn't get it."

"I will have all my licences," she says, then adds with a laugh: "I don't mean they're still valid."

During her flying days, Rungeling also owned a Cessna 170, Cessna 172, Piper Pacer and a Beech Bonanza.

On the ground, she played instrumental roles in local aviation.

In the 1950s, she was appointed business manager of the flying club at the airport, and fought for the airport's preservation among difficult financial times. Welland's mayor in 1954, Alex McCrae, credited Rungeling with being "instrumental in the survival of Welland airport."

"I just guess that kind of fits with what's going on today," she quips.

Also in the '50s — a first for eastern Canada — she led an effort to have an air marking placed atop the huge metal roof of the Atlas Steels plant.

It was something becoming popular south of the border. In this case, and with the backing of the Ninety-Nines who proposed to do all the work, "Welland" and an arrow was painted to guide wayward pilots to the nearby runways.

"But Atlas Steels didn't like that idea. They said 'we're not going to have any women fall off our roof.' So they painted it," she recalls.

"Not too long after that, a chap came in and said it saved his life. He was in a storm and he had no idea where he was and was just going to sit down in a field ... when he saw the 'A' sign and he came into Welland."

A thank-you letter from that pilot is included in one of Rungeling's two newspaper-sized scrapbooks, which she has donated to the archives at Brock University in St. Catharines.

Also in those books are news clippings, photos and news-photos from her days when she was paid to write a weekly col-

umn for *The Welland Tribune* that kept readers informed about news at the airport, the gossip, plus tips on learning to fly. Then managing editor Tommy Morrison dubbed her "the aviation editor."

Rungeling also wrote for *Air Facts* flying magazine, printed in New York City. Twice, she won the Air Industry and Transportation Association of Canada Award for her aviation articles.

Later at age 90, Rungeling would start writing the first of her four books, including tales about her days of flight and of her mother.

In 1964, she became the first woman to sit on Pelham town council.

"I was in it once and that was enough," she says with a laugh about her two-year term in politics.

She tied her hand at golf. It didn't last long.

"My motto was if I flew an airplane like I golfed, I'd be dead years ago."

She stopped flying in the early 1970s when she and Charles, who has since died, got more active in sailing. In the years since, Dorothy Rungeling has continued to be showered with accolades.

She was awarded an Amelia Earhart Medal in the early '80s in recognition of all her achievements, and in 1999 she was inducted into the International Forest of Friendship in Acheson, Kan., Earhart's birthplace and site of a museum and forest of trees from all 50 U.S. states.

In 2003, she was inducted into the Order of Canada.

When the Canadian Forces' Snowbirds precision flying team performed from the local airport in 2008, they created a smoke heart dedicated to Rungeling.

Two years later in 2010, and with support from the Ninety-Nines, Canada Post issued a stamp honouring Rungeling through its special picture postage program.

Next, a possible renaming of the airport from where her aviation story starts.

"Dorothy is a treasure in our community, and there's just

not enough ways to remind people of what she's done," says Carolyn Botari, a Pelham history buff who has been pushing for the airport honour.

Botari, who said she got choked up recently when appealing to Pelham town council to support the name change, said it would be "one more first" among many firsts for a trailblazer.

"The whole story of what Dorothy has done for aviation and for women is amazing," she says.

"I'm pretty sure this will be the first airport named after a woman in Canada."

Niagara Central Airport commission chair Richard Ryhlik, a Pelham town councillor, says the process to rename the facility is in its early stages.

"It's a good idea," says Ryhlik. "It's an idea that was sitting in the back of our mind for some time."

He credits Botari for giving the commission the "nudge" to get moving on the honour.

The municipal councils of Welland, Pelham, Port Colborne and Wellfleet have all given support to the commission to move forward with the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport name.

A private hill is expected to be developed by Welland NDP MPP Cindy Forster and Niagara West-Central MPP Tim Hudak on behalf of the commission, because the airport serves and is funded by municipalities in two ridings.

"I'm happy to do this," Forster says, "and I think it's great if you've read the narrative on Dorothy."

The hill is expected to take the same amount of time to move through the legislature as would a private member's bill. It is hoped to be passed in time for Rungeling's 104th birthday.

"Her story is incredible. I think her story is inspirational," says Barbara Butters, a Port Colborne city councillor and vice-chair of the airport commission.

"I couldn't think of a better honour."

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LOCAL NEWS

TRANSIT

Large turnout for GO train rally

RAY SPITERI
QMI Agency Niagara

Many students want to come to Niagara, but they have no way to get here, say officials with the region's two post-secondary institutions.

"Right now, in the GTA, in the four colleges in Greater Toronto, they're overcrowded, they're turning students back," Niagara College President Dan Patterson said.

"Students want to come to Niagara, but they can't because they don't have daily GO service."

More than 100 people, including Niagara politicians, business and community leaders, attended a rally inside the Via Rail train station on Bridge St. in Niagara Falls on Friday. The rally was part of the continued effort to lobby the provincial government to support year-round GO train service in the region.

Friday was also the launch of a social-media campaign giving interested residents a chance to get their message across. Through www.niagarago.ca, residents can send tweets and selfies to Premier Kathleen Wynne, the minister of transportation and other politicians, urging them to support Niagara's proposal for daily GO train service.

Allan Schmidt, chair of Niagara College's board of governors, said statistics show many people have applied to the school, but don't end up enrolling because they don't have viable transit options to get here from Hamilton or Toronto.

"The majority of Brock students actually come from outside Niagara region, most notably the GTA, Hamilton, those areas," said Drew Ursch, vice president of external affairs with the Brock University Student Union.

"Having this GO train service would be incredibly beneficial to the students, to allow them to commute home... but it would also impact the decision of prospective students who want to come to Brock University, but don't have a car or don't have accessibility or transportation."

He said bringing daily GO train service to Niagara would also help graduate retention rates.

"Students come to Brock University, set down roots in Niagara and they want to stay here, but unfortunately there aren't jobs for every single student that graduates from Brock, but having this GO train service and giving them the link to Toronto, to Hamilton and beyond would greatly increase the retention rates."

Niagara's 12 municipalities and the

regional government have made year-round GO train service their No. 1 priority and have been working collaboratively to make a business case for trains connecting Niagara Falls to Toronto through Hamilton, with stops in St. Catharines and Grimsby.

Last fall, Wynne expressed support, in principle, for extending GO train service to the region, but directed Niagara officials to work with Metrolinx, GO Transit and the Ministry of Transportation to develop a business case.

The business case is expected to be presented to Wynne in April.

St. Catharines Liberal MPP and cabinet minister Jim Bradley was one of several politicians to speak during Friday's rally.

Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati, St. Catharines Mayor Walter Szendzi, Niagara Regional Chair Alan Cassin and Niagara Falls NDP MPP Wayne Gates were the other speakers.

"What we see here today, which doesn't always happen, is we see a unified Niagara. We see people from all over Niagara," said Bradley.

During last year's provincial election, Bradley said "I can see it coming in 2015" when speaking about year-round GO train service in Niagara.

"I hope so, but we shall see," he said to QMI Agency Niagara after the rally, when asked if 2015 is still a realistic target. "That business case is going to be exceedingly important."

Bradley said the minister of transportation understands how important the GO issue is in Niagara.

"He is looking forward, as the premier is, to the case being built here, a business case."

"Many of the people who are here today from the business community, within their own business, they have to justify whatever they're going to do in a business case, and they understand that importance, and they're contributing to making that business case."

Larry Vaughan, of Ground Aerial Maintenance, said having daily GO train service in Niagara would help his business, and many other businesses in the region.

"I can't have my people and my equipment tied up on the highway. I have to get them moving. I have to be able to access Toronto," he said.

Schmidt, who is also chair of the Wine Council of Ontario, said there are almost 100 wineries along the wine route between Hamilton and Niagara.

"These tracks right behind me go right through the middle of that wine route.



MIKE DINIATZIS/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Politicians, local business leaders and supporters packed the Via Rail station on Bridge St. in Niagara Falls Friday as advocates rallied for daily, year-round GO train service into Niagara.

Most of the wineries are only minutes off these tracks," he said.

"For most of those wineries, it is critical to have those tourism wine sales to sustain not only

their business, but for us to continue to sustain the viability of the greenbelt, which we are proud to be a part of and be in.

"But we don't just have to make

it green, we have to make it grow. GO will make it grow."

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Yet more capital improvements in 2015

DAVE AUGUSTYN
For PelhamNews

Last week I wrote here about some of the major projects in the town's 2015 capital budget. Here's some more information about other planned improvements.

Roads, bridges, sidewalks and trails
Pelham continues to invest in our infrastructure. Council approved the final phase of reconstruction of Highland Ave., from Elizabeth St. to Canboro Rd., including a new waterline, sewer laterals (as needed), and an improved stormwater sewer system.

After starting at Pelham Rd. a few years ago, we will reconstruct the next section of Effingham St. from Meeler Rd. to about 500 metres south.

The town continues to evaluate all bridges throughout Pelham. In this case we will replace the corrugated steel "lattice" on Sawmill Rd., just east of Centre St., with a new concrete structure.

Council approved funds to construct the missing section of sidewalk on the west side of Church St. from where it ends (near 1010 Church St.) to the railway track.

Council approved building the next section of the popular trail along the former TH&B Rail line from Centre St. to Murdoch St.

More parks and recreation improvements

After recently reconstructing new playgrounds and sports fields and baseball diamonds, we continue to invest in Pelham's recreational and cultural facilities.

We will continue to work with Royal

Canadian Legion, Veterans Affairs, restoration professionals and interested residents to develop the best plan to restore the First World War cenotaph and German mortar at Old Pelham Town Hall.

In collaboration with the Pelham Tennis Association, council approved funding to help resurface the well-used tennis courts at Centennial Park.

To keep the decades-old promise on the sign, council approved funds to design and build Kunda Park, a new neighbourhood park. The town will invite participation of local residents in the design process.

To help it easier to organize events and festivals, council approved the installation of a new power supply on Pelham St.

New pumpers and other improvements
We continue to invest in the Pelham fire

service and in other areas.

Because fire station No. 2's 23-year-old pumper is ready to become a secondary service vehicle, council approved the purchase of a new pumper. Members of the fire service will help

customize the new vehicle. The town will sell the existing secondary pumper.

Council also approved funding for new firefighter bunker gear; an evaluation of the Dishier Drain watershed; fixing up the service club signs on major entrances to town, and replacing some furniture and equipment at Old Pelham Town Hall.

I look forward to working together with you on these and other improvements in 2015.

You may contact Mayor Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca or read past columns at www.pelhammayordave.blogspot.com.

Shipwrecks – Thorfrid

SKIP GILLMAN

Special to QMI Agency Niagara

The Norwegian freighter Thorfrid was only two years old when it came through the newly opened St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959. The 148.97 metre long by 19.37 metre wide cargo carrier had been built at Göteborg, Sweden, in 1957.

After its inland voyage, the vessel spent most of the rest of its career in saltwater service but was back through the Seaway in 1968. It was sold and re-registered in Hong Kong as Angelina in 1969 and, ten years later, it became Man An for Golden Alpha Navigation of Panama.

Man An was anchored at Singapore when a fire broke out on the bridge on Oct. 19, 1982. The blaze did extensive damage to the structure and equipment with the result that the vessel was declared a total loss.

It remained idle until March 2, 1983, when the former Great Lakes visitor was taken in tow for Ko Sichang, Thailand. It was laid up there until a berth at the scrapyard in Sracha, Thailand, was available and the ship was brought there to be broken up.



Thorfrid in the Welland Canal in 1959 in a photo by Tom Fraser.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTY FRASER

Heart, Boston head to casino in June

QMI Agency Niagara

Classic rock will rule Niagara Fallsview Casino Resort's Avalon Ballroom this June.

Boston, John Kay & Steppenwolf, and recent Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductees Heart will all perform at the 1,500-seat theatre.

The month will also see visits by Richard Marx, Spirit of the Dance and Steven Seagal & Suzanne Kwan.

Heart will do two shows, June 25 and 26. Tickets start at \$50.

Boston will perform June 3 and 4, with tickets starting at \$40, followed by John Kay & Steppenwolf June 5 and 6, with tickets starting at \$35.

Richard Marx performs June 27 (starting at \$25), while Spirit of



QMI/AGENCY FILE PHOTO
Ann, right, and Nancy Wilson of Heart make a return trip to the Niagara Fallsview Casino in June.

the Dance will have an extended run June 12 to 21, with tickets starting at \$25.

Tickets start at \$85 for Ma and Kwan, performing June 7 and 8.

Tickets for all June shows go on sale noon Friday at the Fallsview box office and all Ticketmaster outlets. Phone 1-877-833-3110 or visit www.ticketmaster.ca.

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LOCAL NEWS



Brock thins board of trustees

Brock University is reducing the size of its board of trustees. The university announced the governance reform Friday in

a news release, saying the size of the board will shrink from 32 members to 26 over the next three years.

The release says it is the kind of change seen in many North American universities to make their leadership

bodies more effective and accountable.

The bulk of the members will continue to draw from the community and will sit beside a handful of faculty, university staff and student body members.



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Tuesday, March 24	7:00 – 8:00 pm
Wednesday, March 25	7:30 – 8:30 pm
Thursday, March 26	10:00 – 11:00 am

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Engineering Technologist

The Town of Pelham is now accepting resumes from applicants with an advanced diploma in a post-secondary engineering technology program, O.A.C.E.T.T. member with eligibility for certification, relevant technical education related to the civil engineering field, in addition to:

- technical knowledge related to surveying equipment/applications, GPS equipment/applications, AutoCAD, ArcMap GIS, Microsoft Office applications, online databases, computer application conversion programs
- excellent interpersonal skills (dealing with the public, contractors and colleagues)
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Custodian

The Town of Pelham is now accepting resumes from applicants with a minimum 3 years of experience in commercial cleaning and strong knowledge of commercial chemicals and their application, in addition to:

- experience using floor scrubbers, carpet extractors, commercial vacuums & other cleaning equipment
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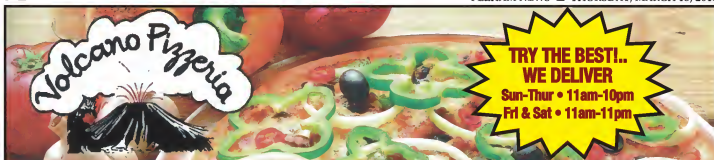
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LOCAL NEWS

■ **WRCC:** Leasing opportunities being explored

Welland could host FlyBoard Niagara

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

Local adrenaline junkies could be in luck.

Welland Recreational Canal Corp. is in talks to bring FlyBoard Niagara to the Rose City.

Once located at the Greater Niagara Boating Club in Niagara Falls, the company — which has participants riding a waterjet-powered board into the air — is looking for a new home and believes a spot on the Welland Recreational Canal may be just the right fit. WRCC executive director Stephen Fischer provided an update on talks with the company Saturday during a special board meeting.

The sport creates "very little noise," very little wake," he said, and has no power requirements as the board runs off a modified jet ski engine.

It would not interfere with the canal's rowing courses.

Two proposed locations are under review, directly behind city hall and at Merritt Island in the waterway across from the WRCC building.

Minimal equipment would be locked up on site and the remaining items are taken to and from the location each day by FlyBoard staff, Fischer said.

The company also has its own liability insurance, he added.

The only requirement Fly-



PHOTO BY DAN DAKIN/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

In this Tribune file photo, Tyler Bagshaw, 17, performs a trick while riding a flyboard on the Welland River in Niagara Falls.

Board Niagara has is that a change room and washroom be available for customers.

It would be at council's discretion whether the city would allow use of its existing facilities, Fischer said. Those details, he added, could be worked into the lease agreement.

"I can't think of any reason why this wouldn't be an allowed use," he said, adding it would mean increased revenue for the city through the leasing opportunity.

It costs \$149 for 30 minutes on the board, though a local rate of \$100 for 30 minutes is also available, Fischer said.

The company had 480 people use its services last year.

A report outlining the leasing options is being prepared and will be presented

to Welland council at a later date.

maryanne.firth@surmedia.ca
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Lifetime Learning Centre
535 Lake Street - Room 104

Tuesday, March 24,
April 21, or May 19
1:00 p.m.

Niagara Falls - Evening/Wknd
Westlane Secondary School
5960 Pitton Rd - Room 1091

Tuesday, March 24,
April 21, or May 19
8:00 p.m.

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■ REGION

Criticism, praise for surpluses

ROB HOULE
QMI Agency Niagara

While it caused outrage for one councillor, it received praise from others.

Niagara Region's corporate services committee endorsed staff recommendations Wednesday to slide \$4.567 million in 2014 budget surpluses into reserves.

While most councillors on the committee spoke in favour of the shift to reserves and praised staff for "fairly accurate budgeting," St. Catharines regional Coun. Andy Petrowski was the exception.

"Is it fair for me to say we have collected from the taxpayers — commercial, industrial, residential — over \$4.5 million in 2014 for these various rate-supported programs which we didn't need to spend in the end?" he asked Helen Chamberlain, the Region's director of financial management and planning and deputy treasurer.

"That's correct," Chamberlain answered. "Folks, that's a huge dollar amount," Petrowski said.

He said the money, rather than be transferred to reserves to cover future shortfalls, should be returned to taxpayers.

"You know, when I go to the store and I overpay for something and I bring back my receipt and I say, 'You overcharged this,' I get back the five dollars."

"We're putting all this pre-paid taxes into these reserves... what kind of comfort will I have that all this money will go back to the taxpayer...? What kind of comfort level will I have we are not going to over-collect \$4.6 million again from taxpayers?"

"That's the story that should be in the newspaper — a Region overcharges \$4.6 million. How are we going to do a better job of not overcharging our taxpayers?"

Chamberlain countered Petrowski's overcharging claim by explaining the bulk of the surplus (\$3.58 million) came from waste-management operations as a result of increased revenue from recycling and an arbitrage award from Stewastaship Ontario. "That accounts for more than half of the surplus that was realized," Chamberlain said. "So those were not items that came from taxpayers."

St. Catharines regional Coun. Bruce Timms praised staff for coming close to his budget projections.

"This is a very small surplus," Timms said. "And the headline in the paper should be something about good management and good policy produces small, dry surpluses." St. Catharines regional Coun. Brian Heit said money in reserves is eventually returned to the taxpayer one way or another.

"Every dollar we put in reserves eventually gets back to them," Heit said. "Whether it be this year or next year, they help keep taxes down, so having a reserve is not a bad thing, it's a good thing."

Heit noted municipalities in Canada, unlike their counterparts in the U.S., are not allowed to budget deficits.

"This is a good news story, not a bad news story," Heit said.

Lincoln regional Coun. Bill Hodgson said reserves are a must for a co-operation the size of Niagara Region.

Spinal Decompression

New Technology Eliminates Neck and Back Pain



Taylor Chiropractic Offices, located in Welland, is headed by Dr. Scott Taylor. Dr. Taylor specializes in providing proven, safe and effective non-surgical options to patients who are experiencing serious, chronic back and neck pain.

Dr. Taylor uses Spinal Decompression technology for back pain due to herniated/bulging discs, degenerative disc disease, sciatic leg pain, facet syndrome, and more.

In the past, a patient suffering from disc problems would exhaust options, including several medications and physical therapy, and when they were not progressing, they were sent for spinal surgery.

Chiropractic care proved extremely helpful in many cases, yet there have been some cases when surgery seemed to be the only other option... until now.

Since its release, clinical studies have shown a good success rate in treating lumbar and cervical disc-related problems.

Spinal Decompression Therapy provides relief to severe back and neck pain sufferers by gently reducing the pressure within spinal discs and providing the patient with gentle and painless decompression of the injured discs.

The process takes place over a series of treatments. The bones of the spine are slowly and methodically separated until a vacuum is formed. This vacuum "pulls" the gelatinous centre of the disc back inside, thereby reducing the disc bulge or disc herniation. Significant disc bulge reduction removes pressure off the spinal nerves and drastically reduces pain and disability. This vacuum also pulls much-needed oxygen, nutrients, and fluid into injured and degenerated discs allowing the healing to begin. Dr. Taylor also uses light force instrument adjusting which is very effective and accurate. (www.sctvictor.com) This treatment corrects other underlying problems that have often resulted in the spinal condition, as a part of your care.

To schedule your personal consultation and examination, please contact

Taylor Chiropractic Offices at 905-734-4515.

Decompression therapy on my back and my neck changed my life. When I first came to the office I was very sceptical of how this decompression therapy was going to help me. I had to try something. X-rays confirmed the degenerated discs in my back and neck. Surgery for my back was out of the question, and taking pain relievers for the arthritis that had set in my neck, arms and hands would become habit forming and more and stronger pills as my system became used to them.

Getting out of bed was a difficult task and walking for more than ten minutes was impossible. I saw the ad for Dr. Scott Taylor placed for decompression therapy. The photo of the office and staff was very inviting. Approximately nine months later - I am pain free and doing all the things I used to do, ride my bike, go for long walks - thanks to the caring staff of Lena and Amy who made my visits pleasant, comfortable and thanks To Dr. Scott Taylor

Decompression Therapy does work.

Sincerely



Donna Mikas

In 2009, a lot of very strange symptoms started to arise. I had severe abdominal pain, was having issues keeping meals down and was also losing feeling and stability in my legs. I had to stop playing all of my sports, and was put on pain medication, went through multiple procedures with many specialists. Tests brought the same results - nothing wrong. I was ready to give up, till my sister-in-law insisted that I see Dr. Taylor. Upon scanning my back, problems were evident, and finally had a name, and potentially a cure.

I started spinal decompression and upon waking the next day after my first appointment I could feel the upset under my feet something I hadn't felt for nearly a year. After a few months of decompression treatments. I was able to start weaning myself off pain medication and finally walk myself into my appointments.

After many months of spinal decompression I was able to get back on the ball field, back on the ice and the volleyball court. All my athletics were possible again - my quality of life was back and all thanks to spinal decompression and Dr. Taylor's confidence in me.

Britney Radzicki (Berganti)



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LOCAL NEWS

PUBLIC HEALTH

Measles outbreak over in Niagara



Dr. Valerie Jaeger, medical officer of health for the Niagara Region.

ALISON LANGLEY
QMI Agency Niagara

The incubation period for the measles outbreak in Niagara is over, but public health officials say now is not the time to be complacent.

All told, there were six confirmed measles cases in Niagara, all involving unvaccinated people under the age of 30.

Dr. Valerie Jaeger, Niagara's medical officer of health, said the generally accepted incubation period for measles is 21 days.

Based on the last confirmed infection on Feb. 10, the incubation period ended March 3.

"And we're 11 days past that now," Jaeger said Thursday.

While the threat may be over, Jaeger is still encouraging residents to be vaccinated. The best way to

protect against the illness, she said, is to ensure vaccinations are up to date.

She credits public health staff as well as both school boards with helping to keep the recent outbreak of the highly-contagious disease to a minimum.

"We were very successful in containing the spread."

Vaccination clinics were held across the region after the first case of measles was confirmed Feb. 3.

Jaeger said 367 people were vaccinated at public health clinics.

Also, the health department distributed 4,826 doses of the MMR — a vaccine against measles, mumps and rubella — to local health care providers in February.

"In perspective, we usually send out 1,000 doses a month so that's a big increase over our usually monthly distribution," Jaeger said.

DOB TYN212121 QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

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LOCALNEWS

HOMELESSNESS



BOB TYMCZYZYN/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Kevin Collins at Brock university where students were camping out to experience homelessness.



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Students sleep outdoors to raise awareness

GRANT LAFLECHE
QMI Agency Niagara

Five days sleeping on the cobblestone walkway at Brock University wasn't as much of a drastic change for Kevin Collins as it was for his fellow students.

The cold. Sleeping on the ground. Not having heat or running water whenever he wanted it.

That's Collins's daily life.

"The fact is, I am homeless," said the 44-year-old geology student, who lives — by choice — in a tent near the university.

So it seemed like it made sense

to do this."

Collins was one of about 20 Brock students who have slept outdoors in a long row for the past four days to help raise awareness about homelessness and support Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold.

Brittany Smith, vice-president of human resources for Brock's Business Student Association, said the annual event over five days and nights specifically attempts to draw attention to the plight of youth homelessness.

"We are talking about young people who don't have a choice or someone to turn to or a place to go," she said.

The students were collecting donations on campus for Community Care as well as online at www.5days.ca/brock/donate.

Student Melissa Trapani said the warming weather made the week easier, but it was still a trial.

"We are not allowed to go home to get anything, or shower or whatever," she said. "So really, none of us have showered for the week. It's really awful not being able to brush your teeth."

However, Trapani said, as difficult as it is, she knows it ends for her on Friday. People who are really homeless don't have that luxury.

For someone like Collins, who lives outdoors because it is cheaper than paying rent, daily activities like shopping happen in the university gym.

He said unlike some homeless people, he is prepared to manage the cold and the elements. He has proper sleeping bags, tent and clothing. Others are not so lucky.

The event ends Friday, but donations to Community Care can still be made online until the end of the month.

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MUNICIPAL FINANCE: Who are the big spenders on taxpayers' dime?

Petrowski tops in remitting Niagara Region expenses

BOB HOULE
QMI Agency Niagara
His expenses are a reflection

of the job he is doing.
So says St. Catharines Coun.
Andy Petrowski, who topped
Niagara Region councillors in

billing for expenses in 2014.
In total, Petrowski was
reimbursed \$8,402 — \$3,667
in mileage, \$2,957 for conference

related expenses; and
\$1,778 in a category noted in a
region report as "other," which
includes non-conference
related meals, events and
functions, telephone, Internet,
books, publications and
miscellaneous expenses.

"If you did an audit of my
mileage, that's because I'm
on up to 20 committees last
year, that I have constituents
calling from all over Niagara
asking me to attend to their
issues — be it a housing
complaint, be it a road complaint
in Fort Erie — so just the
nature of where I'm being
called to," he said.

"Plus we expense mileage
to conferences," Petrowski
added in explaining his mileage
claim, which surpassed
that of southern tier mayors
April Jeffs of Wainfleet
(\$1,802), Vance Badaway of
Port Colborne (\$1,656) and
Doug Martin of Fort Erie
(\$1,617).

"Look, when we use
our own vehicles, there's a
cost, a federal government

approved cost per mileage
that takes into account maintenance
and everything else,"
Petrowski said following a
corporate services committee
meeting Wednesday, where
a report on councillor remuneration and expenses was
released.

"I'm attending to constituent
concerns all over the
region. And it would be
nicer, perhaps, if they were
addressed by their local representatives,
sure. But when I say, 'What happened?' they
tell me, 'I'm not getting service',

"I don't mind hopping in
my car to go look at a pothole
or road crack or whatever."
The mileage rate at the
region is 54 cents a kilometre
for the first 5,000 kilometres
and 48 cents a kilometre
beyond 5,000.

Petrowski's total regional
expenses in 2014 were \$2,667
higher than Niagara Falls
rCoun. Selina Volpatti, who
was reimbursed \$5,736.
Former regional chair Gary
Burroughs was by far the
leader when it came to total
pay and expenses to region
politicians in 2014.

Burroughs was paid
\$119,780 as chair and \$6,562
for sitting on the Niagara
Regional Police Services board
for a total of \$126,352, resulting

in benefits of \$16,073.

Burroughs was reimbursed
a total of \$29,325, which
included \$20,577 for a vehicle
allowance in lieu of mileage.

St. Catharines Coun. Bruce
Timms was tops among
regional councillors in remuneration and expenses —
\$31,218.
That figure includes the
\$10,429 he received for chairing
the Niagara Peninsula Board
Conservation Authority board

of directors and an additional
\$2,538 in NPCA expenses.

Coming in second among
regional councillors was
Henry D'Amico of Thorold,
who received \$51,068 in
remuneration and expenses,
including \$9,297 for chairing
the police services board.
At the other end of the spectrum,
former Welland mayor
Barry Sharpe submitted the
lowest claim for regional
expenses — \$758.

TOPS IN PAY AND EXPENSES

For the 12-month
period Jan. 1, 2014,
to Dec. 31, 2014

VANCE BADAWAY,
\$25,990.14 (regional
council); \$6,562.69 (police
board) = \$32,552.83 +
\$6,352.90 (total benefits);
\$1,656.76 (mileage);
\$401.12 (other) = \$2,057.87
(total regional expenses);
other expenses: \$769.31
(NPCA); \$41,732.91 in total
remuneration and expenses.

DAVID BARRICK,
\$29,459.25 (regional
council); \$1,730.40 (Niagara
Regional Housing board) =
\$31,189.65 + \$6,302.28 (total
benefits); \$961.79 (mileage);
\$1,140.70 (conference related
expenses); \$2,338.03 (other)
= \$43,400.53 (total regional
expenses); other expenses
\$158.76 (NRH); \$42,591.22
in total remuneration and
expenses.

BRIAN BATY, \$29,459.25
(regional council); \$1,180.69
(NPCA); \$761.00 (Niagara
Escarpment Commission) =
\$38,400.94 + \$6,052.84 (total
benefits); \$1,678.03 (mileage);
\$1,200.05 (conference);
\$1,803.14 (other) = \$48,611.26
(total regional expenses);
other expenses: \$384 (NPCA),

\$1,137.50 (NEC); \$50,456.54
in total remuneration and
expenses.

GARY BURROUGHES,
\$119,789.58 (regional
council); \$6,562.69 (NRPS) =
\$126,352.27 + \$16,073.41
(total benefits); \$20,731.64
(vehicle allowance);
\$2,985.15 (conferences);
\$5,406.63 (other) =
\$29,123.42 (total regional
expenses); other expenses
\$202.50 (NRPS); \$171,751.61
in total remuneration and
expenses.

ALAN CASLIN, \$29,679.21
(regional council); \$7,414.83
(total benefits); \$9,739.20
(vehicle allowance);
\$1,119.10 (conferences);
\$1,105.55 (other) = \$39,203.85
(total regional expenses);
\$40,297.89 in total
remuneration and expenses.

HENRY D'AMICO,
\$27,625.88 (regional council);
\$9,297.14 (NRPS); \$2,338.47
(NRH) = \$39,261.49 +
\$7,042.84 (total benefits);
\$289.44 (mileage); \$1,464.81
(other) = \$47,544.25 (total
regional expenses); other
expenses \$2,888.61 (NRPS);
\$120.95 (NRH); \$51,068.15
in total remuneration and
expenses.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **FUNDRAISING:** Organization meets 2014 funding level

United Way falls short of goal

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

While United Way of South Niagara did not reach its goal, Tamara Coleman-Lawrie still considers this year's fundraising campaign a success.

The executive director of the organization that supports programs in Welland, Pelham, Port Colborne and Watford was pleased to announce the campaign wrapped with United Way able to offer at least the same amount of funding as 2014 to eligible agencies.

"Right now, we're where we were last year," she said of the \$600,000 mark where the campaign sat Wednesday — \$50,000 shy of its target.

"It's a huge relief for us to be at the same level of funding."

During the last few weeks of

the campaign, donations continued to "steadily trickle in," Coleman-Lawrie said. That was assisted by a last-minute plea that called for \$100,000 to be raised in 10 days.

"It was so refreshing for us to see people who are able to step up, step up," she said.

"We're so grateful to the community for their support."

Coleman-Lawrie also recognized the reality that the organization was unable to meet its mark.

While the campaign did receive contributions from several new donors, "some accounts and workplace campaigns came in dramatically lower," she admitted.

"We want to make sure that when we do take a step forward, we're not taking two steps back," She called it an "energizing"

ending to what was a difficult campaign.

"You can start to feel dejected. To see people rally together and do what they could was tremendous to us."

Knowing there are still pledges circulating in the community, Coleman-Lawrie urged people to get the donations into the United Way office to ensure the funds are distributed among the many worthy agencies.

She suspects the final total may be closer to \$610,000.

A community investment committee, consisting of 17 people, was selected in November and members began reviewing the 44 funding applications in January.

Each application is carefully analyzed and site visits are made to area agencies when necessary, Coleman-Lawrie said.

The group will be coming together tonight for what she anticipates will be "hours and hours" of discussion to help determine which programs should be funded and to what extent.

The committee's funding recommendations will then be submitted to United Way's board of directors for approval.

Decisions about which agencies and programs receive funding are expected to be finalized by next week. Funding will begin April 1.

In order to fund all the applications received for 2015, United Way would have had to raise more than \$600,000.

An event to celebrate the campaign wrap takes place Friday, April 10, at Sparrow Lakes Golf Course, 105 South Pelham Rd. in Welland from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.



FILE PHOTO

United Way of South Niagara executive director Tamara Coleman-Lawrie.

To register for the free event, visit yourcampaigncelebration.eventbrite.ca, call 905-735-0490 or e-mail denms@southniagara.org.

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■ GO JERRY! GO!

Momentum building for Meridian Centre

KARENA WALTER
QMI Agency Niagara

With more than 5,000 tickets for Jerry Seinfeld's show completely sold out, the Meridian Centre is expecting promoters to take notice.

"We'll start to get that momentum," said Meridian Centre director of marketing Kay Meilleur.

The St. Catharines venue opened in October revealing a new, unknown and untapped market for events.

"This building is a great venue for enticing people to come here. It's new and it's a new market for a lot of people," Meilleur said. "When we can start to show promoters that we're selling out, absolutely it will help us bring in new shows."

Pre-sale tickets for Seinfeld's June 5 show requiring a promotional code sold out in a day. That convinced the promoter to issue a second block of hun-

dreds of pre-sale tickets which also sold out.

Tickets for the general public went on sale last Friday, with about 50 single seats available by the end of the workday.

The last single seat sold on Monday. Meilleur said it's been exciting for the community and local business people, who are thrilled with increased traffic on event nights. When the Performing Arts Centre opens, she said downtown will be jammed.

"I think people in this area are just really desperate for entertainment," she said. "That, coupled with the ability to sell out, is definitely going to attract promoters to the area."

Musicians Tragically Hip and City and Colour previously packed the Meridian Centre in October and February but Seinfeld tickets were scooped up the fastest.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **WEATHER:** Delayed April start first since 1997

Welland Canal opening put on ice

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

For the first time since 1997, ships won't be moving along the Welland Canal in March.

St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. has delayed the opening of the canal due to the large amount of ice in the seaway system and surrounding waterways.

"It's quite rare that we delay the opening," seaway company spokesman Andrew Bogora said of the event that typically takes place in the third or fourth week of March.

While the start of the navigation season was delayed by a few days in March 2014 due to cold weather condi-

tions, the seaway hasn't been forced to push the launch back to April since 1997, he said.

This year, ships will begin transiting the canal April 2.

The opening date is always determined based on the long-term forecast. As the originally-proposed date of March 27 began approaching, ice was not predicted to recede fast enough and the seaway corporation opted to push the date back, Bogora said.

"There's no sense in opening if the traffic is unable to move due to the expansive ice sheet."

The seaway corporation must ensure there is a "suitable margin of safety" when



BNS TYMCZYNSKI/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Heavy ice has delayed the 2015 opening of the Welland Canal.

the canal is opened to traffic.

"Sometimes, as (the launch) gets close, we have to

reassess."

After the long winter Niagara has experienced, the

delay comes as no surprise, he added.

Bogora believes for some

people, the first vessel seen along the canal is a "harbinger of spring. It's something we all look forward to."

Port Colborne's top hat ceremony, which takes place at Lock 8 Park and recognizes the first downbound ship to pass through the canal, is scheduled for April 2 at 8:30 a.m. A traditional top hat is presented to the captain of the first ship to enter the canal from Lake Erie.

A top hat is also presented to the captain of the first upbound ship from Lake Ontario at Lock 3 in St. Catharines.

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @mfrithtribune

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Show runs at Lock 3 canals centre

Young lenses spotlighted at students' exhibit

BOB TYMCZYSYN
QMI Agency Niagara

Zoie Ward and Piylin Christopher laugh as they struggle to hang and level a framed photo for an exhibition by students from Holy Cross Catholic secondary school.

The pair spent part of a recent Tuesday morning preparing for the exhibit called Old Niagara/Young Lenses, which now hangs at St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre.

The project began with Catherine Gandola, a photography and English teacher at Holy Cross who gave the teens the assignment.

"Students had done various styles of photography, but not

architecture," she said.

Once Gandola saw the images coming back, she was surprised by their quality and different approaches.

She thought they should be shown publicly, so she approached the city, where she found a champion in cultural services supervisor Rebecca Cann.

When Gandola told the 10 students their work would be shown, they were thrilled.

"They're over the moon. When I first announced it, they were totally shocked," she said.

"It's been a pretty amazing experience for them and to raise their confidence in the work

they've done."

That's how Grade 12 student Ward feels about the show.

"It's a bit of a surreal experience knowing that the work you put in throughout the year is actually being recognized, that the city will recognize our photography," she said.

"I've always admired how historical and beautiful all the buildings are."

She chose buildings she believed had significant detail and power to their structure.

"I wanted the images to capture the light and the essence of the Victorian era, the architecture and the building," she added.

Ward said the biggest difficulty

was narrowing her list.

"It was really hard coming down to the final two that stood out together, instead of standing out on their own," she said. "There was another photo that I had loved, but the two I finally chose kind of

complimented each other."

Old Niagara/Young Lenses continues until April 12 in the Burgoyne Room.

BOB TYMCZYSYN@QMI_AGENCY_NIAGARA
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BOB TYMCZYSYN/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Zoie Ward, left, and Piylin Christopher hang one of the frames in preparation for the exhibit.



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LOCAL NEWS

■ **ENTERTAINMENT:** Auditions for *Dragons' Den* held in Niagara Falls

A glow-in-the-dark toilet seat for the dragons

TONY RICCIUTO
QMI Agency Niagara

It's the perfect gift for the person who has everything — a glow in the dark toilet seat.

It has already been well received by customers across North America, but now Tim Fittler and Dave Reynolds are hoping they will be able to take the business to the next level if they get a chance to appear on the popular television show *Dragons' Den*.

The two aspiring entrepreneurs were among those who attended the open auditions on Thursday at the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls. Those who are selected are invited back at a future date for filming in Toronto.

Fittler, who is from Collingwood, came up with the idea back in 2000 after he woke up one night to use the bathroom. He hates to turn the light on and ended up making a mess.

"That's when I thought to myself I needed to make a seat that would glow in the dark," said Fittler, who came up with a novelty seat called potty-glow, but it would only last for a few hours.

In 2012, he received a phone call from Reynolds, who is originally from Burlington but now lives in Nashville, Tenn. Reynolds fell off his toilet seat one night and ended up telling his story to Fittler. First they had a good laugh, and then the two ended up working on a new seat that is made out of new material that glows for up to 12 hours.

"If you are brushing your teeth at night with the light on, the seat gets charged up and it lasts all night," said Pittler. "Ladies will also know if the seat is up or down."

The seat is currently being sold online through their own website at www.nightglowseats.com and a number of companies are also carrying it.

The seat sells for \$49.99, plus handling and shipping of \$15. They are currently being shipped across North America.

"We have heard from people who have bought this for their small kids so they don't have to wake up mommy or daddy and we have also heard from people who have bought them for their elderly par-

ents who are less mobile," said Reynolds. "Aside from the entertainment value, it's the safest way to go to the bathroom."

During the day, the seat is white, so it blends in with other fixtures or furniture in the bathroom. At night, they will glow blue or green and are available in both the round and elongated bowl style.

"This will solve a problem for people," said Reynolds. "Hopefully they will put us on TV and we will be able to connect with a lot of people. People will probably not remember our names, but they will remember we are the two dudes with the glow in the dark toilet seat."

Rich Williamson of St. Catharines, a master plumber and former firefighter, was there to pitch his Sky Fall Arrest System, a device he believes has the potential to save lives.

"When the ladder on a fire truck goes up, this aircraft cable goes all the way up to the top," he said while demonstrating his pulley, cable and harness system.

"Firefighters will often get calls at night and in the middle of winter, so the ladder can get icy and slippery as heck," said Williamson, adding there was a case in Florida a few years ago where a firefighter fell and died while training under ideal conditions.

"I have been working on this for a number of years. It's something that will help to save lives, so I'm sure fire departments will buy it," he said.

Williamson said he would be prepared to sell his idea to a company and then sit back and collect some of the royalties.

Those selected to be on Dragons' Den pitch their business concepts and products to a panel of Canadian business moguls who have the cash and know-how to make it happen.

The current dragons are Jim Trelliving, Arlene Dickinson, David Chilton, Michael Wekerle and Vikram Vij. Dickinson and Chilton will not return for the next season.

Auditions have been taking place in a number of cities across the country. The show airs Wednesday at 8 p.m. on CBC.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **ENVIRONMENT:** Monarchs to benefit from plan to delay grass cutting in parts of Port Colborne

Butterfly project begins to take flight

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

The wheels, or wings, are in motion to move an innovative Port Colborne pilot project forward.

The lakeside city's environmental advisory committee hopes to see rural roadside grass cutting delayed during the summer to protect monarch butterflies and their offspring.

The idea was brought to council in September by citizen scientist Patty Moss, who has since been working with the committee to see the project take flight.

Moss spent the warmer months of 2014 collecting data on the black-and-orange butterflies for sev-

eral U.S. universities.

During that time, she was surprised to find hundreds of monarch eggs in milkweed patches along several of Port Colborne's rural roads.

Delaying grass cutting between June and October will not only prevent the eggs from being destroyed, but also provide pollinators the food they need until frost arrives.

The project only impacts a small area, including Pinecrest, Cedar Bay and Weaver Rds. south of Killaly St. E.

Past monitoring by Moss showed those areas have high densities of monarch butterfly eggs and caterpillars.

And the three-year project will only include roadside areas scheduled to be cut by the city three times annually, not those tended to by residents.

Ward 4 Coun. Ron Bodner, while willing to help the butterfly population, wanted to make sure issues of liability with growing weeds and any concerns of nearby residents and farmers are addressed before the project is approved.

"We need to be certain we have every member of the public canvassed on these roads," he said.

A letter outlining the initiative, he added, should reach each landowner as well as farmers who lease land in the impacted area.

Bodner warned a wet summer could be trouble if weeds grow too high too fast, causing difficulty with sight lines.

If people are not properly informed about the project, he added, they might take matters into their own hands and cut the weeds themselves.

Public consultation is key to success, fellow Ward 4 Coun. Barbara Butters said.

"The most important part of this whole project is the buy-in from the public. They need to understand why we want to do this."

It might take a bit of time for the volunteer committee to meet with all landowners and ensure they

have an understanding of the project, but that's the group's intention, vice-chair George McKibbin said.

Feedback from residents will be summarized and presented to city staff and council.

Bodner said the committee might have better luck if it approaches residents with guidelines for cutting already in mind, including the setback around residential driveways and trail entrances to ensure unobstructed views.

For the city, setting limits with contractors who take care of cutting in rural areas is not an issue, said Ron Hanson, Port Colborne's director of engi-

neering and operations.

Guidelines can be put in place to ensure the sides of the trails are cleared to allow pedestrians to safely cross the roadways.

A motion by Ward 2 Coun. Angie Desmarais approved the work done by the environmental committee to this point.

It also asked that applicable rules and regulations regarding the cutting be outlined and brought back to council along with a summary of public comments.

The report is expected to be back before council in about one month.

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